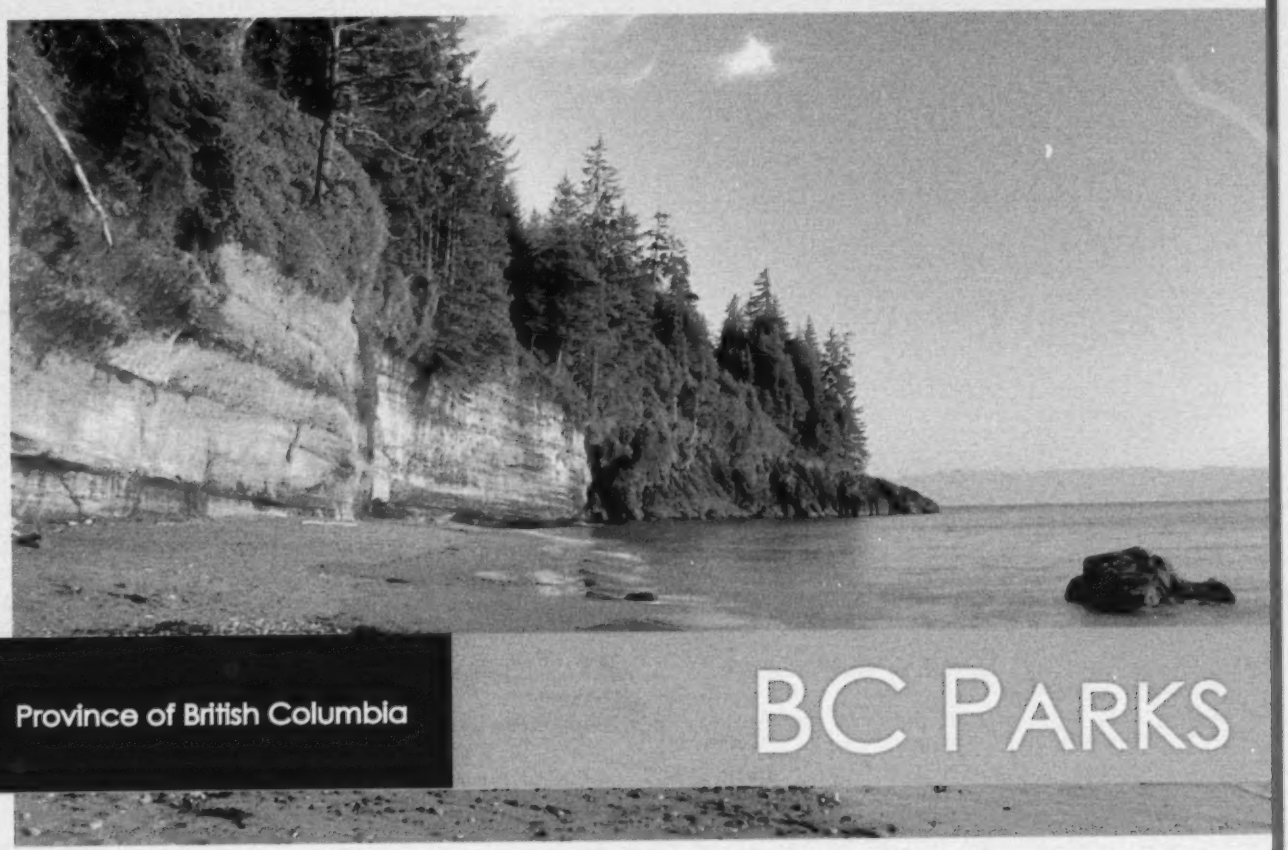

Province of British Columbia

BC PARKS

2014/15 ANNUAL REPORT

BRITISH COLUMBIA BC Parks

Cover photo: Juan de Fuca Provincial Park, Vancouver Island.

Juan de Fuca Provincial Park on the west coast of southern Vancouver Island offers scenic beauty, spectacular hiking, marine and wildlife viewing and roaring surf in its course along the Pacific coastline of the Strait of Juan de Fuca.

There are four main areas to the park: the China Beach Campground, the Juan de Fuca Marine Trail, the China Beach day-use area and Botanical Beach.

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About BC Parks

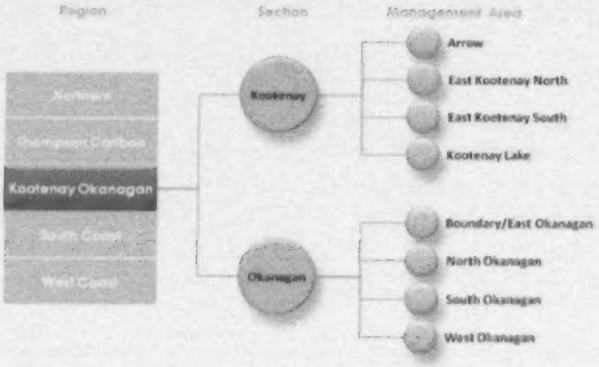
British Columbia's protected areas system is a public trust with exceptional opportunities for conservation, outdoor recreation, education, scientific study and social interactions.

Who we are how are we organized/outline our roles by branch and ROB

BC Parks is part of the Ministry of Environment. BC Parks' services and management are delivered through a headquarters office in Victoria and five regional offices located throughout the province. The regions are subdivided into 11 sections. The sections are further sub-divided into 49 management areas.

Most on-the-ground facilities and services are managed by contractors, called Park Operators (POs). Some Park Operators manage one park and others manage a grouping or bundle of parks in a specific location. Park Operators provide onsite management, service and routine maintenance in day use areas and campgrounds. Standards for this service are set by BC Parks.

Example of BC PARKS organization hierarchy



BC PARKS has a total of 5 Regions, 9 Sections and 49 Management Areas

What we manage

British Columbia's protected areas system provides for the protection and maintenance of important natural and cultural values, while providing outstanding outdoor recreation opportunities.

Protected areas contain some of the best representative elements of British Columbia's natural and cultural heritage. They include ecological reserves; provincial parks; conservancies; recreation areas; and protected areas established under the *Environment and Land Use Act*.

As of March 31, 2015, the system managed by BC Parks included 1,029 protected lands, covering approximately 14.4 percent of the province or approximately 14 million hectares. In comparison to US/Parks Can/British Columbia's protected areas system is one of the largest protected areas systems in North America and one of the largest provincial/territorial systems in Canada.

Protected Areas System Administered by BC Parks (as of March 31, 2015)

Designation	Number	Area (hectares)
Ecological Reserves	148	160,456
Class A Parks	627	10,510,267
Class B Parks	2	3,778
Class C Parks	14	495
Conservancies	156	2,998,507
Environment and Land Act designations	80	383,828
Recreation Areas	2	5,929
Total	**1,029**	**14,063,260**

What are...?

Ecological reserves are reserved for ecological purposes including areas: for research and education; that maintain representative examples of natural ecosystems; that serve as examples of ecosystems modified by human activities and offer an opportunity to study their recovery; that protect rare or endangered flora and fauna; and, unique examples of botanical, zoological or geological phenomena. While most ecological reserves are open to the public, they are not established for outdoor recreation and no extractive activities are allowed.

Class A parks are lands dedicated to the preservation of their natural environment for the inspiration, use and enjoyment of the public. Development in a Class A park is limited to that which is necessary for the maintenance of its recreational values. Activities such as grazing, hay cutting and other uses (except commercial logging, mining or hydroelectric development) that existed at the time the park was established may be allowed to continue in certain parks.

Class B parks differ from Class A parks in that a Class B park may permit a broader range of activities and uses provided that such uses are not detrimental to the recreational values of the park.

Class C parks differ from Class A parks in that a Class C park must be managed by a local board. They are generally small parks providing local recreational amenities.

Conservancies are set aside for: (a) the protection and maintenance of their biological diversity and natural environments; (b) the preservation and maintenance of social, ceremonial and cultural uses of First Nations; (c) the protection and maintenance of their recreational values; and (d) development or use of natural resources in a manner consistent with the purposes of (a), (b) and (c) above. Conservancies provide for a wider range of low impact, compatible economic opportunities than Class A parks, however, commercial logging, mining and hydroelectric power generation, other than local run-of-the-river projects, are prohibited.

Protected areas are established by order in council under the *Environment and Land Use Act* and generally have one or more existing or proposed activities that are not usually allowed in a park (e.g., proposed industrial road, pipeline, transmission line or communication site). Allowable activities are determined by specific provisions when the area is established as well as relevant sections of the *Park Act* and regulations.

Recreation areas are set aside for public recreational use. The majority of these areas were established to allow a mineral resource evaluation under a time-limited tenure; no other industrial activities are permitted. All current recreation areas are being evaluated to determine if they should become fully protected or returned to integrated resource management lands.

Managing the System

Legislative Framework

The provincial protected areas system is governed by several pieces of legislation.

Ecological Reserve Act

This Act provides for the establishment and administration of ecological reserves. Ecological reserves are established by inclusion to the schedules of the *Protected Areas of British Columbia Act* or by order in council under the Act.

Park Act

This Act provides for the establishment, classification and management of parks, conservancies and recreation areas. Class A parks and conservancies are established by inclusion in the schedules to the Protected *Areas of British Columbia Act* or by order in council under the Act. Class B and C parks and recreation areas are established by order in council under the Act.

Protected Areas of British Columbia Act

This Act consolidates in its schedules most of the Class A parks, conservancies and ecological reserves for the purposes of the *Park Act* and the *Ecological Reserve Act*. The Act ensures that the boundaries of these areas cannot be modified to remove lands except by an Act of the Legislature.

Environment and Land Use Act

This Act empowers a Land Use Committee of Cabinet to ensure all aspects of the preservation and maintenance of the natural environment are fully considered in the administration of land use and resource development. Orders can be made respecting the environment or land use, including the establishment of protected areas. The Act is under the administration of the Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations.

Ministry of Lands, Parks and Housing Act

Only sections 5(b), and 6 and 9 relate to the portfolio of the Minister of Environment. Section 5(b) describes one of the functions of the Ministry as being to encourage outdoor recreation, establish parks and conserve the natural scenic and historic features of British Columbia. Section 6 provides the Minister with the authority, for the purposes of the Act, to enter into agreements (subject to the approval of the Lieutenant Governor in Council) with the Government of Canada, the government of another province, or with any other person or a municipality. Section 9 gives authority to the minister to dispose of, acquire and manage land for ministry purposes.

Ministry of Environment Act

This Act gives the Minister authority to acquire property and to enter into agreements with other governments with the approval of the Lieutenant Governor in Council.

Special Accounts Appropriation and Control Act

This Act establishes special accounts, which are accounts in the general fund of the consolidated revenue fund where the authorization to expend money from the account is located in an Act other than a *Supply Act*. Section 9.6 of the Act deals with the Park Enhancement Fund. This section details what monies can be added to the special account and how the monies can be used by the Minister of Environment to enhance volunteer, research and other opportunities in parks and protected areas.

Designations and Changes to the System

Changes to British Columbia's protected areas system continue the ongoing process of designing and implementing a system that provides for improved protection of environmental and cultural values, providing recreational experiences and providing economic opportunities to communities.

In 2014/15, the Province added more than 155,000 hectares to the protected areas system. These additions included:

- adding lands to two existing conservancies as a result of the Atlin Taku Land Use Plan and Taku River Tlingit Strategic Engagement Framework;
- adding marine foreshore areas to four conservancies on the Central Coast;
- adding 0.05 hectares to a conservancy on Haida Gwaii to correct an administrative error;
- adding lands to five Class A parks as a result of private land acquisitions;
- adding Crown lands to two existing Class A parks;
- adding land to one Class A park as a result of an upgrade of a recreation area to Class A park status;
- adding lands to one existing protected area under the *Environment and Land Use Act*.

Changes to British Columbia's Protected Areas System in 2014/15

Area Added to Existing Protected Areas	*Area (Hectares)*
Bodega Ridge Park	147.0
Denman Island Park	2.0
E. C. Manning Park	3.2
Elk Falls Protected Area	10.0
Indian Lake – Hitchcock Creek/At Ch'ini Sha Conservancy	7,835.0
Kamdis Conservancy	0.05
Mahpahkum-Ahkwuna/Deserters-Walker Conservancy	6,438.0
Octopus Islands Marine Park	86.0
Paul Lake Park	3.9
Qwiquallaaq/ Boat Bay Conservancy	736.0
Small Inlet Marine Park	152.0
Syringa Park	22.88
Ugʷiwa'/Cape Caution Conservancy	15,444.0
Ugʷiwa'/Cape Caution – Blunden Bay Conservancy	94.0
Upper Gladys River/Watsix Deiyi Conservancy	25,255.0
West Arm Park	1,219.00

Area Removed from Existing Protected Areas	Area (hectares)
E. C. Manning Park	2.06
Elk Falls Park (area became part of Elk Falls Protected Area)	10.0
Greenbush Lake Protected Area	2.0
Kamdis Conservancy	0.06
Kleanza Creek Park	2.0
McDonald Creek Park	0.0075
Mount Richardson Park	0.75
Paul Lake Park	2.75
Paul Lake Recreation Area (area became part of Paul Lake Park)	3.9
Say Nuth Khaw Yum Park [aka Indian Arm Park]	11.0

Land Acquisitions

From time to time, the provincial government acquires lands for protected areas through purchase, donation, and/or exchange to fill gaps in the protected areas system. Solutions that include partnerships contribute to successful projects.

In 2014/15, 50.9 hectares of lands, appraised at approximately $436,000, were acquired for protected area purposes. Acquired properties include:

- a donation of 43.8 ha on Galiano Island adjacent to Bodega Ridge Park;
- a donation of two inholdings, totalling 4.5 ha, in Cape Scott Park on the northern tip of Vancouver Island;
- the purchase of 0.4 ha adjacent to Okanagan Falls Park; and,
- the purchase of 2.2 ha adjacent to Prudhomme Lake Park near Prince Rupert.

The acquisition costs of about $461,000 in 2014/15 include a payment of $143,225 for the remaining portion of the Quadra Island purchase from 2013/14 and approximately $39,000 in surveys, legal costs and consulting services for projects not yet completed.

Land Acquisitions	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Land purchase value	*$65,000*	*$6,325,000*	*$436,000*

Success Story: Expansion of Bodega Ridge Park

As a result of a subdivision process on Galiano Island in the southern Gulf Islands, 43.8 ha of land were donated to BC Parks adjacent to Bodega Ridge Park. These lands were added to the park in March 2015. This addition, on the northeast side of the ridge, has expanded the park to almost 400 ha and created increased connectivity across the island from Trincomali Channel to Georgia Strait.

Bodega Ridge Park is well known for outstanding views and great walking trails. This park protects critical habitat for the endangered peregrine falcon, which nest, feed and raise their young along the cliffs that overlook Trincomali Channel. These cliffs also provide habitat for bald eagles and turkey vultures.

Unique sandstone formations support large wildflower populations, which are known for their splendour and can be enjoyed from the water by boaters and paddlers passing the park. The park contains unique plant communities such as the hairy manzanita and Gray's desert-parsley.

The foreshore area is important habitat for rockfish (especially copper and quillback), lingcod, sea perches and invertebrate species such as crabs, bivalves, red and green sea urchins, shrimp, starfish and sponges. The weathervane scallop is found in Trincomali Channel, only one of two areas in British Columbia with sizeable populations. Bodega Ridge also protects the rare manzanita, a special shrub species, as well as grasslands and Douglas fir ecosystems, which are poorly represented in the Gulf Islands.

Management Planning

A management plan is the most important document for a protected area. The management plan sets out the high-level framework from which all subsequent protected area management, planning and implementation will take place.

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Percentage of protected areas with valid approved management plans	67%	70%	70%

What it means:

In 2014/15, three new management plans were approved: Ruckle Park and Burgoyne Bay Park on Saltspring Island, and Monashee Park in the North Okanagan area. This brings the total for protected areas with valid management direction to 70%.

As of March 31, 2015, there were 84 active management planning projects across the province. Active projects represent approximately 27% of the 305 protected areas without approved management direction.

There were also five draft management plans released for public review through the BC Parks website. All management planning processes include a minimum of a 30-day web-based public review of the draft management plan.

How it's measured:

Only 'valid' management plans are included. Management plans are considered to be 'valid' if the management plan still provides adequate strategic direction and guidance for the management of a protected area.

Management Plan Policy

The *Strategic Management Planning Policy for Ecological Reserves, Parks, Conservancies, Protected Areas and Recreation Areas* was approved by the Assistant Deputy Minister in July 2013. This policy requires that a management plan be prepared and kept current for every protected area in the BC Parks' system. This performance measure (% of protected areas with approved management plans) is reported on annually.

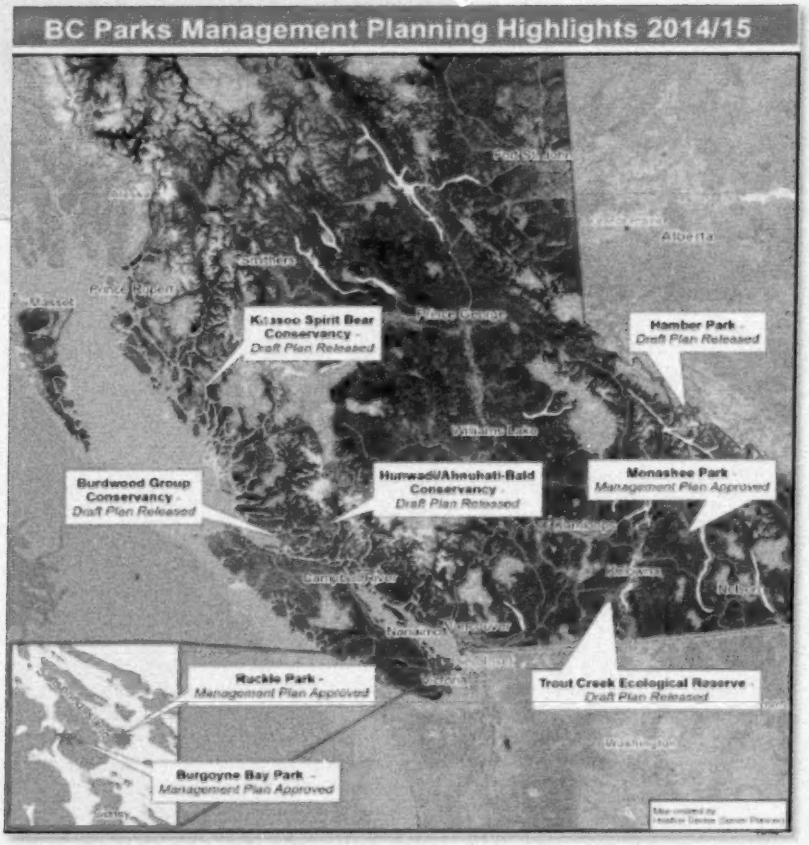
Tools to Assist Management Planning

Several management planning tools are now available to assist BC Parks planners, planning teams and partners to develop consistent and high quality protected area management plans.

The toolkit includes four guidelines and three templates:

- BC Parks Protected Area Management Planning Manual;
- BC Parks Guide to Writing Management Plans;
- BC Parks Management Plan Review and Approval Guide;
- Zoning Framework;
- BC Parks Management Plan Template;
- BC Parks Management Plan Amendment Template; and,
- Management Planning Project Plan Template

Management Plans Approved in 2014/15	***Protected Areas***
Ruckle Park	Ruckle Park
Monashee Park	Monashee Park
Burgoyne Bay Park	Burgoyne Bay Parks
Draft Management Plans Release for Public Review 2014/15	
Hamber Park	
Trout Creek Ecological Reserve	
Kitasoo Spirit Bear Conservancy	
Burdwood Group Conservancy	
Hunwadi/Ahnuhati-Bald Conservancy	


BC Parks Management Planning Highlights 2014/15
Kitasoo Spirit Bear Conservancy - Draft Plan Released
Hamber Park - Draft Plan Released
Burdwood Group Conservancy - Draft Plan Released
Hunwadi/Ahnuhati-Bald Conservancy - Draft Plan Released
Monashee Park - Management Plan Approved
Ruckle Park - Management Plan Approved
Trout Creek Ecological Reserve - Draft Plan Released
Burgoyne Bay Park - Management Plan Approved

Success Story: The Monashee Park Management Plan - Approved in October 2014

Nestled in a vast mountain range southeast of the town of Revelstoke lies a unique and special wilderness protected area; Monashee Park. Named after the Gaelic word meaning 'mountains of peace' this park excludes just that and it was over 60 years ago that a group of local wilderness advocates lobbied the Provincial government to set aside a little over 7,500 hectares of land that today forms the core area of the park. In 2001, the park was enhanced in size by another 15,981 hectares to further protect significant wildlife and habitat values, especially for an endangered herd of Mountain Caribou.

Up until 2014, the park was utilizing a management plan from the early 1990's and it was necessary to bring the park into the fold of current activities occurring both within its boundaries and along its periphery. In 2012, timed with the 50th anniversary of the park, BC Parks launched a new management planning process for the park. For over a year and a half BC Parks staff worked closely with interest groups, tenure holders, and First Nations government on developing a management plan that would provide the necessary direction to safeguard the park's diverse values.

Two well attended public information sessions in nearby communities, as well as focussed meetings with the Friends of Monashee (a park advocacy group based out of Cherryville) made it clear to BC Parks staff that the park held great importance to many people. Seniors, well into their 80's, presented photos of hikes in the park from the late 1960's and youth told tales of recent fishing adventures at Spectrum Lake. The planning process was not just about creating a management plan, but connecting with the people who incredible stories about the park.

A tenure holder, who owns and operates spectacular, mostly year-round, high mountain accommodation just outside the park, had a vision to introduce mountain biking in select alpine areas of the park. For over 10 years, Sol Mountain Lodge has played a strong stewardship role in the remote southern portion of the park. Refinement of the proposed mountain biking areas following in depth discussions with park advocates concerned with impacts allowed BC parks to explore park zoning that would permit mountain biking in a localized area just within the park boundaries.

The new management plan was approved for Monashee Park in October, 2014 and will for many years serve as an important tool in the protection of the park's recreational, cultural and conservation values.

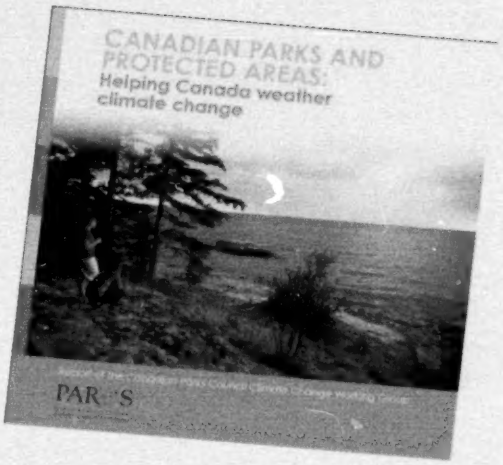
Intergovernmental Relations

BC Parks works with federal, territorial and provincial governments on areas of mutual interest in the planning and management of protected areas.

Canadian Parks Council

The Canadian Parks Council (CPC) is an organization consisting of senior managers representing Canada's national, provincial and territorial parks agencies. BC Parks is an active participant on the Council. The Council provides a Canada-wide forum for inter-governmental information sharing and action on protected areas that:

- promotes excellence in protected areas planning and management;
- advocates protected areas values and interests; and
- encourages cooperation and provides support to member agencies on parks and protected areas.



2014/15 focused on furthering the *Connecting Canadians to Nature: An Investment in the Well-Being our Citizens* Initiative http://www.parks-parcs.ca/english/ConnectingCanadians-English_web.pdf

Following the support of this initiative by ministers responsible for parks across Canada, the CPC met in Indian Harbour, Nova Scotia to work on an implementation and action plan. The CPC continues to evolve as a key organization to build on the benefits of protected areas to citizens in BC and elsewhere.

The CPC was represented at the November, 2014 World Parks Congress in Sydney, Australia http://worldparkscongress.org/index.html#. This Congress occurs approximately once every 10 years and the CPC was able to showcase work on *Connecting Canadians to Nature* and on the importance of youth engagement strategies in the future of parks.

Marine Protected Areas

BC Parks works with other provincial agencies and the federal government on marine protected areas establishment, including proposals for a National Marine Conservation Area Reserve in the southern Strait of Georgia (Parks Canada), a National Marine Wildlife Management Area around the Scott Islands (Canadian Wildlife Service), a Marine Protected Area in Hecate Strait/Queen Charlotte Sound for glass sponge reefs (Department of Fisheries and Oceans), a Marine Protected Area at Race Rocks, offshore from Victoria (Department of Fisheries and Oceans), and the Marine Planning Partnership for the North Pacific Coast (Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations). These proposals are at various stages of development, but all of them require cooperation between provincial agencies and federal government departments.

Canadian Heritage Rivers

Representing British Columbia, BC Parks participates in the Canadian Heritage Rivers program, which recognizes Canada's outstanding examples of river heritage. Three rivers in British Columbia are designated as Canadian Heritage Rivers: the Fraser, the Cowichan and the Kicking Horse (managed by Parks Canada). This year, the Canadian Heritage Rivers program is focussing on efforts intended to strengthen connections among the many non-government agencies that work on river conservation and management across Canada.

Conservation Management

Ecological Integrity

Ecological integrity is an important concept that influences protected area management to ensure natural areas are well managed into the future.

BC Parks continues to be committed to the proactive stewardship of ecological integrity. Performance measures focus on the consistent use of conservation and business process tools that have been provided to regional staff.

Ecological integrity occurs when an area or network of areas supports natural ecosystem composition, structure and function, and a capacity for self-renewal. It is a complex concept and difficult to measure directly.

An assumption is made that the BC parks and protected areas system will be managed for ecological integrity when there is consistent application of conservation tools. Each of these tools interacts with the others, so without full use and understanding of the whole suite of tools, ecological integrity on the ground would be at risk.

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	2013/14	2014/15
Percentage of BC Parks sections (11) that conducted annual management planning	100	100
Percentage of BC Parks sections (11) that supported the annual management planning process with the use of the Conservation Risk Assessment database	89	73
Percentage of BC Parks management areas (47) that updated information in the Conservation Risk Assessment database	51	40
Number of management areas (47) that added data to the Conservation Risk Assessment database	33	28

What it means:

BC Parks regional operations are subdivided into sections (11). The sections are further sub-divided into management areas (47). Annual management planning (AMPs) is a business process used to identify and prioritize work projects in a section or management area. AMPs was standardized across the province and are now required to be completed annually. All sections conducted AMPs in 2014/15.

The Conservation Risk Assessment (CRA) is a database that catalogues the values and threats in each protected area in the province. The CRA is used as input to many of the planning and evaluation processes in protected area management, including discussions that occur in the annual management planning process. Seventy-three percent of the sections supported their AMPs with the use of the CRA database, a decrease of 16% from the previous year.

The CRA database is most effective when information is added or updated by regional staff on a continual basis. Twenty-eight areas added data to the CRA database. This is a 5% decrease from the previous year.

Representation:

To the extent that our protected areas system represents the ecosystems in the province there is some assurance that the majority of species across the province have some level of protection.

The Protected Areas Strategy directed the land use planning tables to represent the biogeoclimatic (BEC) zones within the province in the protected areas system. Biogeoclimatic Zones are broad areas of similar climate, geography and vegetative characteristics. There is currently roughly 14% of the landbase in the protected areas system. If all 16 BEC zones were represented evenly they would each have 14% protected.

The zones:

BAFA:	*Boreal Altai Fescue Alpine*	*IDF:*	*Interior Douglas-fir*
BG:	*Bunchgrass*	*IMA:*	*Interior Mountain-heather Alpine*
BWBS:	*Boreal White and Black Spruce*	*MH:*	*Mountain Hemlock*
CDF:	*Coastal Douglas-fir*	*MS:*	*Montane Spruce*
CMA:	*Coastal Mountain-heather Alpine*	*PP:*	*Ponderosa Pine*
CWH:	*Coastal Western Hemlock*	*SBPS:*	*Sub-boreal Pine Spruce*
ESSF:	*Englemann Spruce-Subalpine Fir*	*SBS:*	*Sub-boreal Spruce*
ICH:	*Interior Cedar Hemlock*	*SWB:*	*Spruce Willow Birch*

BGC Zone	% of the total BGC Zone area within the province that is protected
BAFA	29
BG	12
BWBS	8
CDF	4
CMA	18
CWH	19
ESSF	17
ICH	10
IDF	5
IMA	29
MH	20
MS	9
PP	5
SBPS	9
SBS	7
SWB	23

	0% - 6% of the BEC zone in the BC protected areas system
	6% - 12% of the BEC zone in the BC protected areas system
	Greater than 12% of the BEC zone in the BC protected areas system

Climate Change

British Columbia's protected areas system plays a key role in the province's response to climate change.

Climate-induced changes in protected areas are resulting from extreme weather events, droughts, flooding, insect outbreaks, invasive species, coastal erosion and wildfires. More subtle effects are occurring as a result of the gradual increase in temperature (especially in the winter) including shrinking glaciers, rising sea levels, changes to the water cycle and the movement of organisms. These changes, while not dramatic on a day-to-day basis, are affecting the distribution of species and the organization of ecosystems.

An important focus of protected areas management in future years will be in maintaining functioning ecosystems and facilitating the movement of species within and across boundaries. Large landscape level processes have always played an important role in sustaining ecosystems; these processes are now recognized as being critical in maintaining the resilience of the natural world. One of the key ways that BC's protected areas system can address these processes is by focussing on protecting large landscapes.

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	2013/14	2014/15
Percentage of **terrestrial** protected areas network* in large landscapes >2,700 km²	60	61
Percentage of **terrestrial** protected areas network in landscapes >1,000 km²	72	71
Percentage of **terrestrial** protected areas network in landscapes >500 km²	80	81

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	2013/14	2014/15
Percentage of **nearshore** protected areas network in large landscapes >270 km²	57	57
Percentage of **nearshore** protected areas network in landscapes >100 km²	75	73
Percentage of **nearshore** protected areas network in landscapes >50 km²	81	81

In 2014/15, data was collected from 19 sites (down from 30 in the previous year).

**Protected areas network includes all provincially and federally designated protected areas.*

What it means:

The terrestrial thresholds are based on work identifying minimum landscape areas to maintain mammals sensitive to disturbance. In nearshore ecosystems, research indicates that the optimal size of protected areas may be an order of magnitude less than in the terrestrial environment. In 2014/15, 63% percent of the protected areas in British Columbia are part of large protected landscapes.

Success Story: Helliwell Coastal Bluff Restoration Project:

In March 2015, the initial phase of Coastal Bluff/Garry Oak and Associated Ecosystems restoration began. During this phase work was completed in an area of approximately .35 ha; young Douglas Fir trees were removed and a variety of native plants were planted to begin habitat restoration.

Tree removal was used to emulate fire disturbance which once kept the coastal bluff area of Helliwell as open grassland meadows. Several unique and rare species are associated with the open ecological communities and it's hoped that this project will help maintain these species as well as restore habitat that once existed for species such as Taylor's Checkerspot butterflies lost in Helliwell.

There is still considerable work to be completed in this project. Ongoing planting of native species, work to remove invasive species, installation of interpretive signage and delineation of the restoration area through a technique of ropes and weights (already in use in the rest of the park) will continue to further encourage habitat restoration.

Before Phase 1 coastal bluff, Garry Oak and associated ecosystems restoration work

After Phase 1 coastal bluff, Garry Oak and associated ecosystems restoration work

Monitoring

Monitoring is particularly important during a period of rapid change. It is difficult to predict exactly where and how fast changes are occurring. Monitoring the changes can help illustrate the rate and variability across the province.

BC Parks continues to implement long-term Ecological Monitoring. While the monitoring framework identifies eight biomes that have associated data collection protocols, BC Parks is directly involved in setting up plots and collecting data in five biomes: alpine-subalpine, forest, grassland, wetland and intertidal. Using standardized protocols, each management area is engaged in setting up plots in two biomes, which will result in approximately 100 permanent plots at full implementation. The program is based on the principles of citizen science and where applicable, volunteers are involved in the data collection.

In 2014/15, 19 sites were monitored, this is a decrease from 30 sites in 2013/14.

Pacific Chorus Frog – Burges James Gadsden Park (wetland monitoring)

Invasive Species Management

Invasive species are non-native species whose introduction into British Columbia causes economic or environmental damage or harm to human health.

BC Parks completed over 40 projects in 2014/15 to monitor and treat invasive species in parks and protected areas.

BC Parks Invasive Species Program

2014/15 Budget and Treatments

Budget	**Treatments:**	BC Parks Budget:	$65,075
		Park Enhancement Fund:	$10,381
	Total Budget:		**$75,456**

Shared Stewardship

BC Parks offers numerous ways for individuals, community groups, organizations and corporations to support the provincial protected areas system. Contributions made through volunteering, partnerships and donations enhance the protection and management of the province's protected areas system.

BC Parks has a long history of partnering with a wide variety of individuals, community groups, universities, not-for-profit organizations, First Nations, Park Operators and corporations from across the province. From land acquisition and ecological monitoring initiatives to trail building and infrastructure improvements, these partnerships provide invaluable benefit to BC Parks. Individuals, community groups, organizations and corporations across the province volunteer their time, energy and resources in numerous ways, including; trail building, maintenance, and infrastructure improvements to ecological monitoring and research, restoration projects and interpretive programming.

Volunteers

Every year thousands of dedicated volunteers contribute time, energy and expertise to BC Parks.

The goal of the Volunteer Program is to strengthen capacity within the BC Parks system of protected areas and to create a lasting natural legacy by continually improving the volunteer experience.

BC Parks strive to do this by:

- allocating resources to the development and ongoing support for the Volunteer Program;
- ensuring that volunteers are actively engaged as part of core business; and,
- building public awareness, enthusiasm and commitment for volunteering in British Columbia's protected areas.

Since the implementation of the BC Parks Volunteer Strategy in 2012, several significant improvements to the BC Parks Volunteer Program have been made including:

- launching new Partnership Agreements for volunteer groups that offer Commercial General Liability and Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance;
- reinstating the annual external awards program to recognize volunteers;

- building staff and volunteer capacity through development of toolkits to support the new Partnership Agreements;
- developing an interactive online volunteer community website to provide a resource to individuals looking to get involved in the volunteer community; and,
- establishing a Volunteer Blog (http://www.bcparksvolunteers.ca/) to share stories, showcase our volunteer accomplishments and success stories, and enhance public engagement.

Support for Volunteer Projects

In 2014/15, BC Parks invested $240,000 from the Park Enhancement Fund to support community and volunteer projects across the province. Funding was distributed equally between projects that promote the conservation and recreation/visitor experience aspects of protected areas and supported a mosaic of individual projects. Based on feedback from staff and community partners, the success of these projects lies in:

- the ability to leverage additional funds and skills of volunteers;
- engagement with partnership groups and the public; and,
- enthusiasm of volunteers and project leaders.

Organized Volunteer Groups

Organized volunteer groups include legal entities, mainly registered non-profit societies that have entered into Partnership Agreements with BC Parks. They range from small community trail clubs to larger provincial societies, all with an interest in protecting and improving our park system. The following information is related to groups who entered into a Partnership Agreement with BC Parks during 2014/15.

Partnership Agreement Highlights for 2014/15	
Total Number of Active Partnership Agreements for 2014/15	45
Total Number of Volunteers working within a Partnership Agreement	1,152
Total Number of Individual Volunteer Hours from Partnership Agreements	14,416

Individual Volunteers

Individual volunteers vary from members of the public looking to dedicate their time and experience to a BC Park, to individuals from abroad interested in conservation projects or gaining field work experience. Some of our common individual volunteer activities include trail maintenance work, invasive species monitoring and removal, shoreline cleanups and many more.

Volunteer Program Highlights for 2014/15	
Total Number of Individual Volunteers	265
Total Number of Individual Volunteer Hours	4,031

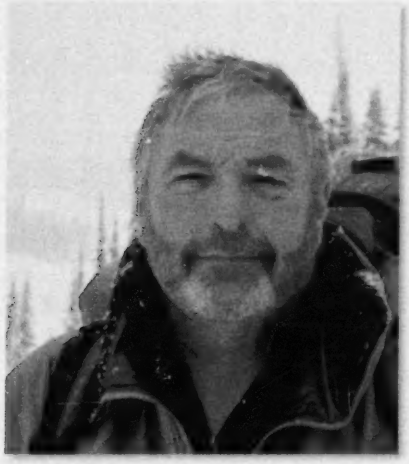
Total BC Parks Volunteers

Total Volunteers for 2014/15	
Total Number of Volunteers (groups and individuals)	1,417
Total Number of Volunteer Hours (groups and individuals)	18,447

2014 Volunteer Awards

Volunteers are integral to the success of BC Parks and each year, to recognise their efforts and outstanding contributions, BC Parks selects recipients for annual achievement awards for people and organizations that go above and beyond. This year, winners received a framed print presented to them at a local awards ceremony hosted by BC Parks regional staff.

2014 Volunteer of the Year - **Ken Matheson**



Ken Matheson first volunteered with BC Parks to create a film about Khutzeymateen Park. He continued on to produce a Bowron Lake park orientation film and a second trip-planning video for the park's webpage. As an independent filmmaker, Ken blends his passion for the environment with visual storytelling to engage and capture his audience. The resulting film provides a powerful outreach tool for managing the fragile balance between recreation and conservation in B.C.'s protected areas.

To produce the video for Khutzeymateen park, Ken organized logistics and equipment needs, built a relationship with Lax Kw'alaams First Nation, and spent many hours editing and narrating the finished product.

The collaboration and participation of the Lax Kw'alaams community was a huge part of the success of the Khutzeymateen project. By taking the time to meet and engage the community, Ken ensured the project received tremendous support and gratitude from Lax Kw'alaams on the process and final result. The Hereditary Chief was brought into the Khutzeymateen to tell stories and sing songs on camera. This Chief had not been in the Khutzeymateen in a decade; the experience was moving for all involved. This turned out to be the last trip to this remote area for the Chief as he passed away shortly after the film was completed. The footage captured of the Chief's experience was passed along to his family to share with the younger generations, and to serve as a reminder of their Elder and his vision to protect this land he so deeply loved.

Building on the experience with his first BC Parks film, Ken has continued on to create an engaging and informational film documenting the history and importance of Bowron Lake park from the 1800's to present. The film showcases the beauty and values of this pristine wilderness canoe circuit. Two years in the making, the film is in final stages of development and will be ready for release for the 2015 operational season.

2014 Volunteer Group of the Year – **Friends of South Slopes (FOSS)**

Friends of South Slopes (FOSS) have been involved in promoting and protecting the South Slopes area of Kelowna for over 18 years. Their membership consists of a diverse demographic with a great range in age and a mixed group from the hiking, mountain biking, naturalist and equestrian communities. This community trust allows them to raise significant funds each year, which goes directly into the parks in the form of volunteer support, equipment, materials, signage and contractor costs. They currently have 136 registered members and from 75 to 100 non-registered members that volunteer time on behalf of FOSS.

FOSS **has helped manage the Crawford Trail system in Myra-Bellevue park since its designation in 2001 and** also helped manage Okanagan Mountain park since the fire in 2003. Myra-Bellevue and Okanagan Mountain parks are within close proximity to Kelowna and are very popular recreation areas for both residents and tourists. The Crawford trail system in Myra-Bellevue sees close to 50,000 visitors annually and its popularity is growing every year. Over the years, FOSS has been instrumental in upgrading and maintaining over 60 trails, totaling 196 kms, in Myra-Bellevue and Okanagan Mountain parks. In 2003, both Myra-Bellevue and Okanagan Mountain parks were severely ravaged by wildfire, the fire created major erosion issues, continuous danger tree and windfall issues and, in later years, major trail brushing requirements. FOSS was instrumental in repairing these popular trail systems.

FOSS is proactive in reaching out to the community and connects with the public through its website (http://foss-kelowna.org/), newsletters, and Facebook page. They encourage youth to get out and enjoy nature, developed an interpretive trail in Myra-Bellevue drawing school groups, and created "adopt-a-trail" program in 2007. FOSS has also developed a volunteer's 'Guide to Trail Maintenance' manual for volunteers to use as a resource for other volunteers and groups around the province.

FOSS continues to develop creative solutions to maintain a large and maintenance intensive trail system, such as the adopt-a-trail and trail sponsorship programs. Not only are they providing an important service in maintaining these popular trails, they are also making BC Parks relevant by reaching a large and broad group within the community to get out, enjoy nature and support BC Parks.

2014 Volunteer Legacy – **Ross Keller**

Since 2005, Ross Keller has dedicated thousands of hours to the Hən̓əmd̓i Məkola/Yorke Island conservancy, located off the east coast of Vancouver Island. Yorke Island Battery was built between 1939 and 1945, with searchlights, large guns, and over sixty support buildings to defend against a potential Japanese invasion during the Second World War. The post was decommissioned in 1946 when the threat of attack diminished, and nature quickly began reclaiming the island.

Ross' interest and enthusiasm for Yorke Island began prior to the island becoming a conservancy in 2007. He spent hundreds of hours gathering historical information from the National Archives, visited each remaining veteran who had served at Yorke Island during the Second World War, and spoke with the families of people who had served at the isolated post, collecting a wealth of stories before they were lost forever.

After the conservancy was established, Ross cleaned out several historical buildings, made a photo inventory, helped construct the only toilet on the island, and continues to maintain the trail network and update the inventory of historical artifacts around the island. He has provided visitors tours around the island, and if a veteran or family member cannot attend, he takes the time to offer virtual tours.

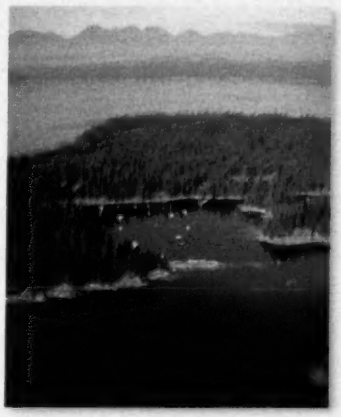
Ross organized an event recognizing the 70th anniversary of military presence on the island, enabling two veterans who served on Yorke Island to return one last time. In 2014, he organized 75th anniversary to celebrate the first military personnel arriving. He coordinated the efforts of BC Parks, Canadian Armed Forces, Western Command Military Historical Vehicle Society, Sayward Valley Legion, Campbell River Search and Rescue, Sayward Community Futures, the Village of Sayward, and others. He provided tours and organized a formal ceremony in remembrance of those who fought at Yorke Island.

The 15th Field Artillery Regiment presented Ross with an appointment to Honorary Battery Commander of Yorke Island Battery for his efforts in protecting the history and place of Yorke Island. This is the highest civilian honour and the greatest effort of any person in the protection of memory and history of the 15th Field Artillery Regiment.

Through his engagement with the communities and businesses in the greater surrounding area, Ross's efforts have resulted in renewed interest into a long forgotten historical military base, and enhanced the cultural aspect of B.C.'s parks and protected areas.

2014 Community Partner of the Year - **Marine Parks Forever Society (MPFS)**

The BC Marine Parks Forever Society (MPFS) was created in 1989 by the Council of B.C. Yacht Clubs to assist with the acquisition and development of provincial marine parks. It is a non-profit, volunteer run organization with members that care deeply about marine parks. Since 1989, MPFS has contributed over $1.2 million towards the acquisition of marine park lands valued at over $16 million. This includes lands at Pirates Cove, Smugglers Cove, Wallace Island, Jedediah Island, Musket Island, Hardy Island, Wakes Cove, Octopus Islands, Allison Harbour, Squitty Bay and Small Inlet Marine Parks.



MPFS shared BC Parks' vision to expand the protected areas on Quadra Island. MPFS raised their agreed contribution from $100,000 to $433,000. Their ability to raise funds brought in other partners to make this acquisition happen. In addition to raising funds for land acquisition, MPFS has produced brochures and booklets of marine

charts for BC Parks. MPFS has been a tremendous asset in advocating and advertising marine parks through more than fifty yacht clubs along the B.C. coast. In the past year, MPFS saw an opportunity to partner with BC Parks on marine recreation facilities. A stern tie project has been initiated in a number of parks to create safe, ecologically friendly mooring for the boating community.

MPFS raises funds through donations, bequests and selling books on marine parks. They have provided substantial financial leverage over the years that have allowed BC Parks to create a significant number of marine parks with key recreational opportunities. They are an important advocate for the boating community and their support is vital to a strong network of marine parks.

Partnerships and Donations

Contributions made through partnerships and donations enhance the protection and management of the province's protected areas system.

The BC Parks' Partnership and Donation Program is designed to provide opportunities for individual citizens, community groups, non-government agencies and private corporations to work with BC Parks on mutually beneficial projects. Through the Park Enhancement Fund (PEF), BC Parks supporters can donate to specific projects or parks and *receive an official tax receipt* for their contribution.

While donation amounts vary significantly from year to year and cannot be predicted with any accuracy, it is clear that BC Parks is a valuable partner, attracting significant donations since the establishment of the Park Enhancement Fund in 2008. Over the last seven years, the Park Enhancement Fund has raised over $2 million from donations and community and corporate partnerships. It is important to note that donations for land acquisition initiatives cannot be deposited into PEF and are not included in the totals below. Please see the table below for figures from the last three years.

**Partners and donors receive official tax receipts for their contributions to our provincial park system.*

Park Enhancement Fund

Park Enhancement Fund Investment Highlights for 2014/15	
Park Enhancement Fund Investment	$240,000
Total Value of Projects (i.e., leveraged resources)	$575,000+
Number of Citizens Reached	4,600+
Community Partners	100+

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	***2012/13***	***2013/14***	***2014/15***
Corporate Partnerships & Sponsorships	*$55,000*	*$84,163*	*$46,855*
Community Partnerships	*$25,280*	*$29,350*	*$46,162*
Donations & Make Your Mark Program	*$193,492*	*$147,406*	*$55,048*
Other (i.e., merchandise)	*$2,690*	*$230*	*$2,322*
Total partnership contributions to the Park Enhancement Fund	***$276,462***	***$261,149***	***$150,387***

BC Parks' Planned Giving Program

Over the years, BC Parks has been the recipient of numerous bequests (gifts in wills), most of which have been donations of land through the Federal Ecological Gifts Program. In 2012, BC Parks officially launched the Planned Giving Program to provide BC Parks' supporters another option to donate financial securities to the Park Enhancement Fund. Not only do these types of gifts provide tax benefits to the donor, they also allow donors to support specific projects or parks of their choice, while they are still alive.

The Canada Revenue Agency applies significant tax benefits to estates when individuals leave donations (of cash or land) in their wills to organizations permitted to issue official tax receipts. This means less of their estate is taxed and more is left to their chosen beneficiaries.

Planned Giving is a method of supporting registered charities and other qualified donees that enables philanthropic individuals to make larger gifts than they could make from their daily income. Gifts can be specific assets of cash, securities or other property – and can be left to the beneficiary through a bequest, or donated while the donor is still alive.

Planned gifts are referred to as such because they require more planning, negotiation and counsel than other gifts. For example, donations of securities (stocks or bonds) may require the involvement of legal counsel and financial institutions. In addition, leaving a bequest may require counsel from professional estate planners.

In the past few years, BC Parks has received substantial planned gifts through the program. This year a donation of $254,000 in financial securities (stocks/bonds) by an individual was used to upgrade the Mamquam Trail in Garibaldi Provincial Park.

For more information on BC Parks' Planned Giving Program, please click here or visit our website: http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/partnerships/planned-giving/.

Park Operators

Park Operators provide operational services to maintain and enhance the quality of the visitor experience; the condition of the facilities and the ecological values that support British Columbia's protected areas system.

Since 1986, Park Operators have been managing provincial parks on behalf of BC Parks. Park Operators maintain a variety of facilities, campgrounds, day-use areas and trail systems around the province. Some Park Operators manage one park while others manage a grouping or bundle of parks within a specific geographic location. The areas operated by Park Operators are still protected under the full authority of the *Park Act*. Park Operators enter into legal Agreements with BC Parks to ensure these areas are managed in compliance with the *Park Act*.

BC Parks works closely with Park Operators to deliver service to park visitors and maintain the parks to a high standard. Park Operators are a passionate group of contractors who believe in providing high quality service to ensure all visitors enjoy their outdoor experience. Some of their responsibilities include providing visitors with recreational experiences, maintaining and enhancing facilities, and conserving natural, cultural and recreation values. British Columbia has one of the highest quality park systems in the world, and this is reflected and showcased in their work.

Success Story: 2014 Park Operator of the Year— **Rick Terrell**

Retiring in 2014, Rick Terrell had operated parks in Desolation Sound since 1981. Under his guidance, the parks in Desolation Sound transitioned from being secret retreats for a select few to a highly popular kayaking and boating destination. Rick was instrumental in helping BC Parks understand and meet the expectation of the growing kayaking community, while maintaining relationships with the local community and First Nations who were essential to the success of the parks.

In his humble way, Rick provided a very high standard of service to the public for 34 summer seasons. Always available to answer a call, Rick was often the first to respond to boaters in distress and has fought more than his share of forest fires himself. He adapted his role as the parks evolved, and was willing to add more parks to his duties as the region gained popularity as a recreation destination. He worked collaboratively with BC Parks to pilot an online backcountry registration system for Desolation Sound, making it easier for visitors to plan their trips as well as more efficient for BC Parks to collect the fees needed to maintain the parks. Ricks efforts have truly created a viable business opportunity for a new Desolation Sound Park Operator to take over.

From a self-described "Garbage Man of Desolation Sound" to the more recent roles as "Desolation Sound Logistics Consultant to the Province" and "Desolation/Okeover Bundle Operator", for 34 years, the public has simply known him as 'Ranger Rick'. BC Parks applauds Rick for his tireless dedication to Desolation Sound and its visitors, and wishes Rick a very happy retirement.

Engaging First Nations

BC Parks engages and collaborates with First Nations in a variety of ways and through a range of different initiatives and programs.

As long-time leaders in collaborative working models with First Nations, BC Parks contributes towards lasting reconciliation efforts between the provincial government and First Nations while continuing to meet the business needs of our agency, including recreational and ecological sustainability.

BC Parks has successfully negotiated a broad range of collaborative agreements with First Nations which allow greater First Nation participation in the management of British Columbia's protected areas. In addition to BC Parks specific, single agency agreements, BC Parks also contributes to the development and negotiation of broader government agreements, such as strategic engagement, reconciliation and treaty agreements.

In 2014/15, BC Parks staff, across all business areas, were involved in a wide variety of initiatives and discussions with First Nations. Examples of our work includes:

- Working with First Nations through established collaborative management agreements for effective park and protected area management
- Collaborating with First Nations in the development of management plans to ensure long-term conservation, cultural heritage and recreation objectives
- Effectively negotiating with First Nations through specific park and protected area issues or challenges
- Seeking opportunities to enhance economic and human well-being through increased involvement of First Nations in park and protected area management.

Highlights of 2014/15 include the signing of park management plans with the Kitasoo Nation. As well, we are engaged in final treaty negotiations with the Wuikinuxv Nation for the co-managment of protected areas. This is the first treaty of its kind and will explore new approaches for working collaboratively in the co-management of protected areas with our First Nations partners.

Visitor Experiences

British Columbia`s incredible system of protected areas offers experiences as unforgettable and diverse as the province`s natural landscapes. Travelling alone or with friends or family, BC Parks has opportunities for visitors of all ages, in all seasons, to explore and enjoy. Accessibility to parks experiences vary, they can be found by land and water, including: picnicking, wilderness camping and backcountry cabins, winter sports, cycling, wildlife viewing and hiking, boating, fishing and swimming – an adventure awaits everyone.

Overnight Accommodations

Vehicle-accessible frontcountry campgrounds that are often surrounded by forested habitat and in close proximity to beaches and trails provide campers with easy access to a variety of nature and recreation-based activities. Park Operators maintain BC Parks' facilities and services in over 250 campgrounds and day use areas, and often provide visitors with complementary amenities such as equipment rentals, interpretive programs and small concessions. In some locations, visitors arriving by bicycle will find walk-in campsites and boaters needing vessel camping can tie up to mooring buoys or docks. Those looking for an alternative to camping may find cabins available in select frontcountry campgrounds.

Designated group campsites found in Alice Lake, French Beach, Paul Lake, Kokanee Creek parks and in numerous other frontcountry locations can accommodate school groups or large gatherings of family and friends (15 people or more) in one site. Facilities vary from shelters to picnic tables, to fire pits and wood burning stoves, to additional services such as barbeques and propane lights.

A variety of backcountry camping opportunities are offered throughout the province, including Stone Mountain, Golden Ears parks and Stein Valley Nlaka'pamux Heritage Park. In some locations, facilities such as tent pads, picnic tables and food caches (for secure food storage) are provided, *while other backcountry campsites are in authentic wilderness settings with no facilities.*

Some campsites are accessed by foot, horse, ATV, snowmobile or are in marine environments and accessed by boat. Vessel camping in the backcountry is often found in protected anchorages, with little or no facilities.

Backcountry cabins and huts are found in a variety of environments in areas such as in the Height of the Rockies, Tantalus and Wapiti parks and are often times available throughout the four seasons. Accommodations range from basic shelters to more equipped accommodations with facilities and services ranging from sleeping bunks and pit toilets, to kitchens, woodstoves, wash sinks, and propane lights and heat. Visitors seeking a base for hiking, ski touring, climbing, or just enjoying the view can experience the backcountry in rustic comfort.

Day Use Opportunities

Day use activities, as a destination event or as part of the camping experience, are plentiful. Waterfront picnic areas provide a variety of beach activities for everyone to enjoy and forested, grassland, and alpine environments offer day use opportunities ranging from the relaxed to the challenging. Visitors can swim, paddle, or ski while children of all ages can explore tide-pools, climb adventure playgrounds or take part in a nature program with Jerry the Moose. Others may learn to fish, photograph the local flora, or hike one of the many trails designed for every ability level.

Designated group picnic sites are available in several frontcountry locations, such as Martha Creek, Rathtrevor Beach and West Lake parks. Facilities and services range from large, open shelters and change houses, to barbeques, playgrounds and nearby sandy beaches.

British Columbia's parks and protected areas also offer unique experiences thanks to the natural, cultural and historic features found throughout the province. A visitor can climb the granite cliffs of the Stawamus Chief, horseback ride the Dewdney (heritage) Trail, tour the Nisga'a basalt flows, cycle the Kettle Valley Railway, or scuba-dive with the Emerald Princess in Mermaid Cove, to name just a few extraordinary adventures.

Visitors preferring not to 'go it on their own' will find a variety of commercial recreation companies operating throughout the province. These authorized adventure tourism specialists may offer overnight accommodations or guide guests on hiking, climbing, skiing or river-rafting trips, kayak/canoe tours, or big game and fishing excursions. For more information on where these operations are available in BC Parks, **click here** and search by Permit Type – 'Commercial Recreation' or visit the BC Parks website at: http://apps.nrs.gov.bc.ca/pub/pae/active-permits

BC Parks Reservation Service

The Discover Camping™ Reservation Service provides visitors with peace of mind when planning their favorite experiences in BC Parks. The reservation service allows campers to book their spot and be assured that a site that meets their needs is waiting for them upon arrival. Discover Camping also allows people to look up campsite features, view pictures and manage their bookings.

The Discover Camping Reservation Service has been in place since 1996. It is user-pay model to ensure it's not subsidized by taxpayers. The reservation, change and cancellation charges remain at 1996 pricing.

The objectives of the reservation system are to:

- offer consumers certainty and peace of mind;
- provide fair and consistent access to high demand sites; and,
- improve business efficiencies and customer service.

In 2014, the BC Parks Discover Camping Reservation Service offered local, national and international visitors access to campsites 109 frontcountry campgrounds in 97 provincial parks, including: 78 group sites, two cabins, over 5,200 frontcountry campsites and two limited entry backcountry wilderness experiences (Bowron Lake Canoe Circuit and the Berg Lake Trail in Mount Robson Park) for a total of over 5,300 individual resources on the reservation system. Approximately 50% of BC Parks' camping opportunities remain as "First Come, First Served".

Three new frontcountry campgrounds were added to the Discover Camping reservation service in 2014: Meziadin Lake, Prudhomme Lake, and Paul Lake Provincial Parks.

More than 133,000 reservations were made through Discover Camping in 2014 (a 10% increase from the 2013 season). Ninety-four percent of the reservations were made via the Internet while six percent were made through the call centre. Approximately 5% of the overall Internet transactions occurred over a mobile interface. Over 75% of all reservations made in 2014, originated from British Columbia. ***(Origins of reservations made in 2014: BC= 75% AB=14%, rest of Canada =3%, US=3%, overseas=5%)***

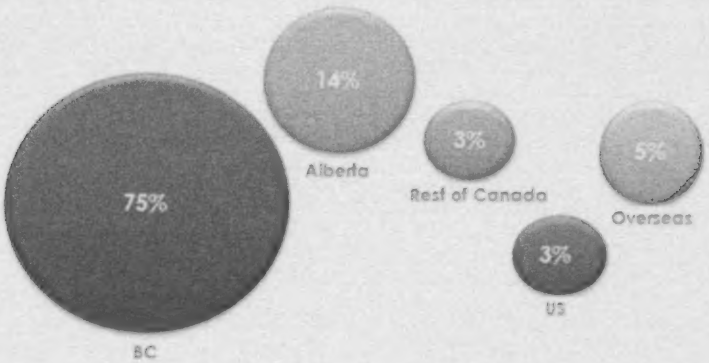
In recent years, enhancements to the reservation service include:

- the ability to book up to three reservations at one time (shopping cart model);
- the introduction of a new first-come-first-service inventory availability tool;
- improved refund request guidelines and process on BC Parks' website; and,
- reminder emails for customers to ensure they had a chance to change or cancel their reservations prior to any penalties applying.

BC Parks continually improves the reservation service by conducting annual reviews, reviewing customer feedback and by increasing the number of campgrounds and sites on the system, where appropriate.

To view the Discover Camping website, please **click here**, or visit the Discover Camping website @ **https://secure.camis.com/Discovercamping/**

Discover Camping Customer Profile



For more information about BC Parks' reservation service and its policies, please visit: BC Parks Reservation Service or to make a reservation, visit Discover Camping.

BC Parks Backcountry Registration System

BC Parks introduced the ability to purchase backcountry permits through the Discover Camping Registration System in 2011. There are no service fees to purchase backcountry permits online; it is simply a convenient way to prepay for permits prior to arriving in the park.

Joffre Lakes and the "Desolation Sound recreational area" (comprised of Desolation Sound, Copeland Islands and Malaspina Provincial Marine Parks) and the Elfin Cabin in Garibaldi Provincial Park, were added to the registration system in 2014/15.

The Discover Camping Registration System sold over 4,529 permits, for over 8,400 overnight stays, in 30 provincial parks during 2014/15.

For more information about the Backcountry registration system:
http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/registration/

Attendance

Park attendance information is used by BC Parks to track visitation trends, assist in evaluation of performance, and guide planning for the operation and management of British Columbia's protected areas system.

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Day Use Visits	18,215,709	18,692,209	18,573,802
Camping Visits	2,436,015	2,448,344	2,572,617
Boating Visits	150,284	166,513	204,375
Total Attendance	**20,802,008**	**21,307,066**	**21,350,794**

What it means:

The number of visitors to provincial protected areas is used to measure the contribution of protected areas to the government's priorities of healthy communities, tourism and economic development.

Park attendance is affected by the availability and quality of facilities and services, but is also strongly influenced by external factors such as local weather conditions, transportation infrastructure (e.g., highway construction), the value of the Canadian dollar and general tourism trends.

Overall park attendance in 2014/15 increased slightly (0.2%) over the previous year.

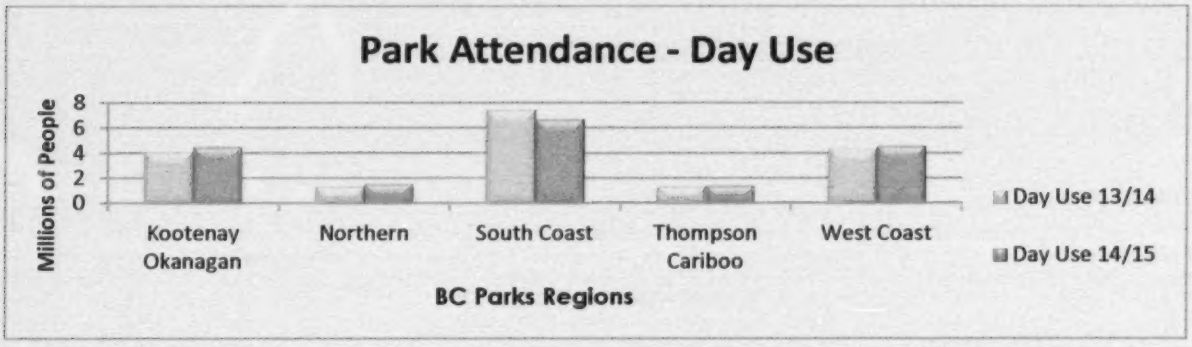
How attendance is measured:

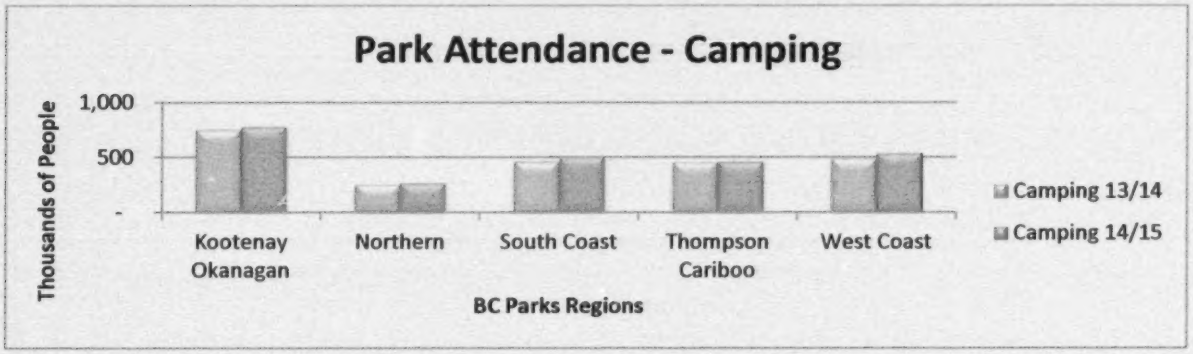
BC Parks tracks attendance through campground registrations, trail and traffic counters, and visual counts. In order to have standard, comparable information, all "visits" are stated in person days (so one person staying for two days counts as two "visits"). Average party sizes are applied to daily counts of cars, boats, camping parties, etc., to obtain the number of actual visits. Average party sizes are based on detailed party composition information collected through visitor surveys.

Every BC Parks region, with the exception of the South Coast, saw increases in day use attendance. The Northern Region had the largest increase, with a 16 percent increase. The South Coast was the only region to have a decrease in attendance, dropping nearly 10 percent.

The South Coast's decrease in attendance can be attributed to shortened ski seasons caused by poor snow conditions at Mount Seymour, Cypress, and Blackcomb Glacier provincial parks.

All regions except Thompson Cariboo (a slight decrease of 0.1%) had increases in camping attendance. The South Coast had the largest increase at 9.2 percent. Overall, camping attendance increased by 5.1 percent.





Improving Visitor Facilities

Public recreation needs change and evolve constantly. BC Parks strives to continue to meet the needs of its visitors and maintain their high satisfaction with its performance.

The strategic direction of the capital investment program is to offer visitors a safe and welcoming environment that reflects the core natural, recreation and cultural values of BC Parks. Park investments in facilities and infrastructure attract families, offer new recreation opportunities, improve accessibility, protect visitor health and safety, and increase revenue and attendance.

Projects completed in 2014/15 include:

Lakelse Lake	140,000	Campground electrification
Moberly Lake	150,000	Bridge upgrades and enhancements
Purden Lake	157,000	Campground and day use upgrades
Brandywine Falls	70,000	Barrier free improvements to CN rail crossing
McDonald Creek	290,000	Day Use and campground development and improvements
McDonald Creek	465,000	New toilet/ shower building
Syringa	425,000	Toilet/shower building conversion
Lakelse Lake	290,000	Road upgrade
Liard River Hot Springs	350,000	Renovation of composting toilet building
Meziadin Lake	60,000	Campground electrification
Mount Robson	250,000	Rebuild Hargreaves Shelter
Roderick Haig-Brown	600,000	Day use area repairs and reconstruction
Cape Scott	200,000	Ranger cabin replacement
Montague Harbour Marine	150,000	Campground and day use reconstruction
Rathtrevor Beach	325,000	Campground and day use reconstruction and improvements
Smelt Bay	175,000	Visitor facility service upgrade

Several other high use provincial parks have seen recent capital investments:

E.C. Manning Park	250,000	Mule Deer campground reconstruction
Okanagan Lake Park	375,000	South Park toilet shower building replacement
Syringa Park	200,000	Campground reconstruction and expansion
Mount Seymour Park	150,000	Lower Mountain trail upgrades
Miracle Beach Park	250,000	Campground reconstruction

BC Parks Capital Facilities Program Investments

Capital & Compensation Expenditures	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Campgrounds & Day Use Areas	$ 7,785,961	$ 6,038,581	$ 5,273,643
Toilet/Shower Buildings	$ 1,695,896	$ 1,400,349	$ 2,101,916
Water & Sewer Systems	$ 1,112,253	$ 1,192,547	$ 881,437
Roads & Trails	$ 1,608,290	$ 2,250,815	$ 2,101,363
Other Buildings & Structures[4]	$ 1,677,942	$ 2,100,809	$ 3,033,976
Sub-total Facilities	**$ 13,880,342**	**$ 12,983,101**	**$ 13,397 335**

[*]Other Buildings & Structures includes picnic shelters, boat launches, viewing platforms, heritage building restorations, etc.

Over the past five years, BC Parks has invested over $60 million in buildings and land improvements across the province. The total replacement value of all facilities investments in British Columbia's protected areas system is approximately $700 million.

Success Story: Roderick Haig-Brown Provincial Park Accessible viewing Platform and related Facilities

Roderick Haig-Brown Provincial Park, located along the Adams River between Shuswap Lake and Adams Lake, protects sockeye salmon spawning habitat. Every four years, the park hosts a festival celebrating, and coinciding with, the famous Adams River sockeye salmon run.

The park features a river-eroded landscape, abundant wildlife, and archaeological evidence of large settlements of the Shuswap First Nation. In the spring of 2012, BC Parks undertook an improvement of the park's facilities, with all work to be completed in time for the 200,000 visitors expected for the 2014 salmon run festival. Interest in the salmon run has grown over the years and the challenge was to design and construct facilities that met current and future attendance levels.

BC Parks made a concerted effort to ensure the final design had the full support of the Shuswap First Nation and the Adams River Salmon Society. The final concept plan included a display area acknowledging the First Nations historic activities with the river, an accessible viewing platform, and accessible trails connecting the vehicle parking area to the new facilities.

Construction started in October 2013 and was completed in September 2014, well in time for the festival which was a resounding success. BC Parks invested $1.6 million in the park's upgrades; it also received approximately $105,000 in further outside contributions, along with many free services from, the general contractor, the Adams River Salmon Society and the Shuswap First Nation.

The new improvements are designed to emphasize the historic importance of this area and its salmon run to the Shuswap First Nation. Visitors can learn about the area's cultural and natural values through new interpretive signs. There is also a communal 'gathering place' that can host large groups, festival events and other organized community events.

Success Story: Cape Scott Provincial Park New Ranger Cabin

Cape Scott Provincial Park is located at the remote northern most tip of Vancouver Island and is a popular destination with locals and visitors. The park was home to a 30 year old Ranger Cabin that after assessment, was determined to be in dire need of replacement.

In preparation of construction, BC Parks, in consultation with the Quatsino and Tlatlasikwala First Nations, assessed various potential sites. The project team selected the meeting point of the Cape Scott Trail and Nels Bight as the most appropriate location at is offered protection from winter storms and future sea level rises, while allowing for greater interaction between park staff and hikers.

The nine month project, commenced in November 2013, with Tamlin International Homes designing the new cabin. Tamlin constructed the building offsite at their manufacturing facility, disassembled it into 72 shrink wrapped packages and delivered it via helicopter to the construction site where it was reassembled by a four person crew.

The building uses sustainable materials resistant to the moist local maritime climate and has a foundation designed to adapt to the site's sandy soil and high winds. The floors were constructed from two inch reclaimed Douglas Fir wood, the walls lock joint, six inch Western Red Cedar, and a heavy gauge metal roof with foam insulated tongue and groove cedar ceiling. A cistern collects rain water, a solar electrical system provides LED lighting and ventilation, and a wood stove heats the structure.

One of the two out-buildings serves as an 'out house', or, toilet, the other stores volatile materials; both are constructed with aluminum framed walls and recycled plastic wood walls. BC Parks expects the building to offer many years of excellent low cost, sustainable service to park visitors.

Success story: Strathcona Park – Now accessible to every "body"

Strathcona, the first and oldest provincial park in British Columbia, has now become fully accessible to all visitors with the introduction of the "TrailRider" Program.

In support of its commitment to accessibility, BC Parks has partnered with Strathcona Wilderness Institute (SWI), a long term non-profit volunteer partnership group, to develop the TrailRider program to complement their long term strategy of making Strathcona Park accessible to all visitors.

Expanding from the successful development of the barrier-free Centennial Trail, started in 2005 and completed as a loop in 2009, along with the completion of the Strathcona Wilderness Centre at Paradise Meadows trailhead in 2010, BC Parks is committed to providing full accessibility to all visitors wanting to experience one of the more popular areas of Strathcona Park. Program success to date is directly attributed to community support, blending funds from BC Parks, Provincial and Federal Grants, all local Rotary groups, Mount Washington Alpine Resort, and donations from businesses and individual supporters.

The TrailRider (photo) is a unique single-tire wheelchair designed to allow individuals with mobility constraints, to explore and enjoy the outdoors. Assisted by two - four porters, or 'Sherpas', this unit expands the opportunities for participants to access and explore terrain and trails that might otherwise be beyond their limits. The TrailRider has been tested on various terrains from Mount Everest base camp, to the top of Mount Kilimanjaro, as well as city parks, provincial wilderness areas and everything in between.

The program offers pre-scheduled trips around Paradise Meadows (2hrs), Battleship Lake (4hrs) or Helen Mackenzie Lake loop (6hrs) and matches 'riders' with volunteer 'porters/Sherpas', or, groups can reserve the TrailRider for their own experience with their own 'porters/Sherpas', at their convenience.

Public Safety

BC Parks strives to provide high quality and safe recreation opportunities for visitors.

Hazard Trees

The objective of the hazard tree program is to promote the conservation of wildlife trees and associated stand-level biodiversity in a safe and operationally efficient manner.

Forests, and the trees within, are an important part of the recreational and inspirational experience offered by BC Parks. As trees age, they may become weakened by forest pests, wildfire, wind, snow or lightning and can pose dangers to visitors. However, these trees also provide valuable habitat for wildlife. Certified assessors can recognize existing and potential wildlife trees know how to integrate them into protected areas management and are able to distinguish between safe and dangerous trees. The trees are removed in a way that minimizes the environmental impact to the surrounding habitat.

During 2014/15, BC Parks spent approximately $78,000 to remove trees that pose a safety hazard to visitors in campgrounds, day use areas and along roads and trails in more than 30 parks and protected areas.

Fuel Management

Living in or adjacent to forests is highly desirable; however risks from potential wildfires exist in such areas. BC Parks endeavours to be good neighbours by reducing these risks through prescribed fire and tree removal to thin forests in interface areas.

Prescribed fire is used by BC Parks both to reduce forest fuels and restore ecological integrity; the method is a controlled application of fire to a specific land area to accomplish management objectives. These fires are managed in such a way as to minimize the emission of smoke and

maximize the benefits to the site. Fire is a natural, normal process in many ecosystems and is necessary to maintain a healthy forest. Many plants and animals have adapted to fire and some actually depend on it. In 2014/15, BC Parks treated over 600 hectares of protected area lands with prescribed fire in four protected areas: Churn Creek Protected Area, Skihist, Stuart River and Johnstone Creek Parks.

Compliance and Enforcement

Park rangers patrol parks and protected areas across the province, making contact with thousands of visitors each year. In most cases park rangers use education and information as their primary tool to generate voluntary compliance with park and protected areas rules and regulations.

In 2014/15, the most common offences under the *Park Act* and Park, Conservancy and Recreation Area Regulation, were related to domestic animals (unrestrained or in closed parks), failing to obey signs, guiding without a permit, unauthorized activities (e.g. illegal use of vegetation) and trespass. Park rangers also enforce other provincial statutes in protected area such as the *Wildlife Act, Motor Vehicle Act, Liquor Control and Licensing Act*. Park rangers exercise a significant degree of discretion in how they resolve compliance matters and utilize a combination of approaches (including public relations, warnings, evictions, violation tickets, *Park Act* orders, and court prosecution) to generate compliance.

BC Parks continued to work closely with various agencies (e.g. Park Operators, Conservation Officers, Natural Resource Officers as well as RCMP and local police) to ensure the protection of the public and natural and cultural values contained in the protected areas we manage.

In 2014/15, park rangers were engaged in joint compliance and enforcement activities including campfire ban enforcement, long weekend compliance and enforcement projects (See Tribune Bay Success Story below) and monitoring illegal snowmobiling inside and outside protected areas.

Success Story: Tribune Bay

Tribune Bay Provincial Park is a 95 hectare park located on Hornby Island, just east of Vancouver Island. Tribune Bay is a day use park (no camping is allowed) that has an annual average attendance of approximately 55,000 visits.

In the early 2000's, it became evident that large gatherings, including raves, parties and bonfires, were impacting the overall visitor experience in the Park. Park Rangers and even the RCMP had been forced off, or left the beach due to concerns for officer safety. These large gatherings often involved drugs/alcohol and led to many public complaints, as parties often occurred primarily on long weekends, when there was limited enforcement capacity to address the approximately 2,000 visitors per day.

In 2012, a formal Compliance Action Plan (CAP) was developed to address these issues more effectively. A collaborative approach between BC Parks, the local community, RCMP, local campsite operators and liquor stores was key to stopping the parties before they started. Annual policing meetings were held prior to the summer season, with all of the above groups in attendance, to ensure that all parties were in agreement and any issues/concerns were addressed.

The CAP had BC Parks Rangers (and other enforcement agencies where possible) attend the Park on long weekends to support the Park Operator, who manages the site on a day to day basis. Park Rangers provided a C&E presence in order to ensure that large groups, especially those with alcohol and/or intent on setting up unauthorized events, were not able to establish themselves in the Park and disrupt the experience of the broader public wanting to enjoy the Park.

Since the implementation of the CAP, BC Parks and its partners have contributed significant resources to implement the plan – in the case of BC Parks an average 33 ranger days have been dedicated to this project annually. Overall, the predominant violations relate to the presence of alcohol (average of 58 pour outs/year and the bulk of the 52 annual "turn-aways", another key to stopping the party before it started) and dogs in the Park (average of 62/year). Non-compliance associated with illegal camping, causing a disturbance and illegal commercial activities has been reduced with BC Parks and its partners' presence.

While written evictions and violation tickets have been issued on occasion, BC Parks' practical focus on the application of the public relations approach in the face of such a high volume of users appears to be having the desired result of improving the visitor experience, maintaining a family friendly atmosphere and reducing the frequency and size of these large problematic groups. Comments from visitors indicate an appreciation of the efforts and the approach BC Parks and its partners have taken as well as the positive impact on the visitor experience that has become significantly more prevalent in recent years.

Engaging the Public

Community Engagement

With rapidly changing demographics and increasingly diverse communities across the province, BC Parks aims to stay relevant and connect with the public in meaningful ways. Throughout 2014/15, BC Parks was involved with community partnerships, youth engagement initiatives and public events.

Youth Engagement

Inspiring the next generation of British Columbia's protected area users.

Get Outside BC is a collaborative youth leadership project whose main objective is to strengthen youth attachment to British Columbia's protected areas by empowering young leaders across the province. The project is a partnership between BC Parks, the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society BC Chapter (CPAWS-BC), Mountain Equipment Co-op, and the Child and Nature Alliance of Canada.

Participants for the Get Outside BC project were recruited from six regional hubs across BC – Vancouver, Nanaimo, Kelowna, Kimberley, Smithers and Province-

wide. In total, 26 youth ranging in age from 13-18 participated in Phase I of Get Outside BC 2014. During Phase II they collectively reached over 500 people during their outdoor community events.

The purpose of the project is to connect youth to the outdoors in a meaningful and sustainable way by giving them a sense of purpose and the capacity to inspire others to spend more time in the outdoors.

The goal of the three-phased project is to provide both a gateway experience for youth engagement with British Columbia's wilderness and subsequent opportunities for engagement through youth-led follow-up events and the creation of a supportive youth network of natural leaders. Rather than providing a one-time experience, Get Outside BC provides youth the tools and resources to develop an enduring connection to the outdoors and a lifelong identity as a natural leader.

BC Parks Passport Program

In partnership with the Park Operators, Destination BC Visitor Centres and the Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC (Learn to Fish Program), BC Parks successfully completed its fourth year of the BC Parks Passport Program in 2014/15.

Participants, while visiting a provincial park or Visitor Centre, receive a high quality BC Parks Passport in order to collect stickers/stamps and receive special prizes. In 2014 alone, approximately 20,000 passports and 4,000 collectible pins were shipped out to the over 200 participating sites.

The passport encourages exploration of BC Parks and Visitor Centres, and participation in Learn to Fish programs by offering this fun incentive program. The passport also contains trip planning and other useful information about BC Parks programs and services and receives sponsorship support from the Camping and RVing BC Coalition and British Columbia Magazine.

Camping and RVing BC Coalition

As a long-term partner of the Camping and RVing BC Coalition, BC Parks continues to contribute to and derive benefit from the coordination of marketing initiatives in this important sector. BC Parks' membership in the coalition allows for leveraged resources in marketing provincial parks and supporting BC Parks' programs. Current members of the non-profit coalition include: BC Parks, the British Columbia Lodging and Campgrounds Association, Destination BC, Recreation Sites and Trails BC, RV Rental Association of Canada, Northern BC Tourism Association, RV Dealers Association of BC, the BC Society of Park Operators, Parks Canada and Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC.

Learn to Fish Program in BC Parks

The Learn to Fish program, run by the non-profit Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC (FFSBC), is a free program designed to attract new anglers to recreational fishing, particularly youth and their families. The program has a strong focus on conservation and increasing environmental awareness. The Learn to Fish program started in BC Parks in 2006 and has expanded every year since.

In 2014 FFSBC, in partnership with Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation, Columbia Basin Trust Fund, the Province of BC, and BC Parks, delivered the Learn to Fish program to 4,199 youth and their families with over 115 sessions across 28 provincial parks.

With the $5,000 contribution from BC Parks, FFSBC increased their participation in provincial parks by 60% - expanding the Learn to Fish program in six additional provincial parks.

The partnership between BC Parks and the Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC not only teaches youth and their families how to fish and the importance of conservation measures but it also provides a great recreational opportunity in British Columbia's parks.

Wells Gray 75th Anniversary

In 2014, Wells Gray Provincial Park celebrated seventy-five years of conservation and recreation stewardship.

The celebration engaged youth and families, local communities, arts, heritage and tourism agencies, and First Nations. Events included exhibitions, contests, social media attention, and conservation and recreation projects.

Salute to the Sockeye Event at Roderick Haig Brown Park

The Salute to the Sockeye Festival is an international event that occurs during the Adams River dominant sockeye salmon run every four years. Once again, Roderick Haig Brown Provincial Park was the venue for this major festival in October, 2014.

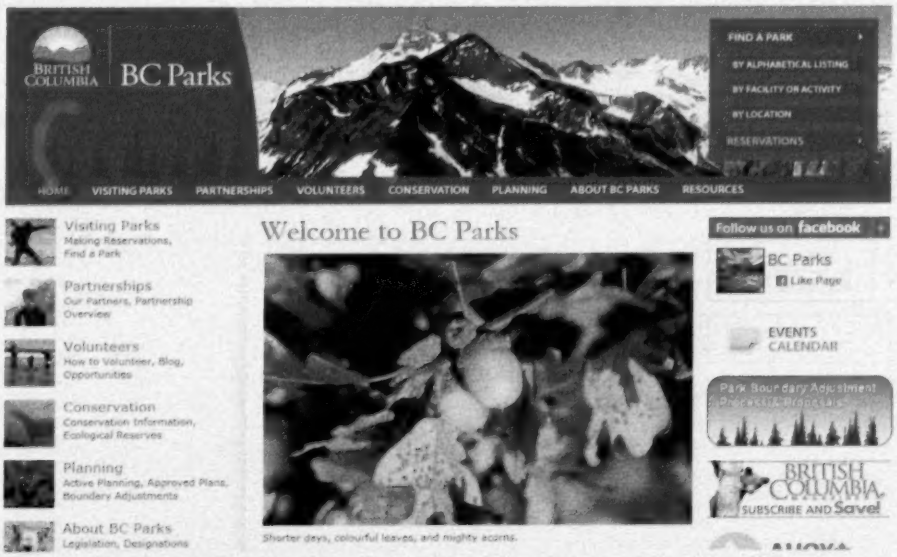
This 3 week event hosted more than 125,000 visitors (with 25 to 35% of those being international visitors), including over 10,000 visitors during the Thanksgiving long weekend alone, and over 8500 school children attending the many Ministry of Environment and Department of Fisheries and Oceans interpretation programs.

Salute to the Sockeye could not happen without the dedication of the almost 120 volunteers, putting in over 2700 volunteer hours, and the support of an additional 18 corporate sponsors.

BC Parks Website

The BC Parks website continues to be one of the most popular websites within the British Columbia government.

The BC Parks website provides real time information about protected areas and serves as an essential communication and information focal point for the public, including:



- protected area information (fees, location maps, activities/facilities available, opening/closing dates and campsite availability dates);
- vital public health and safety messaging (campfire bans/protected area closures, flood alerts, wildlife issues, avalanche alerts, protected area related health alerts);
- policy and user information for the Discover Camping reservation service and direct links to the service;
- opportunities for public review and comment on draft management plans and boundary adjustment processes;
- conservation information (natural and cultural values);
- volunteers (volunteer opportunities/initiatives, stories and interactive blog);
- opportunities to support British Columbia's protected areas system through partnerships and sponsorship; and
- events calendar and links to public initiatives and promotional programs.

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Number of unique visits to BC Parks website*	2,960,028	3,471,857	3,691,950
Average visits per day	8,109	9,511	10,112

What it means:

In 2014, the BC Parks website had an average of over 10,100 visits each day; an increase in traffic of almost 6% from 2013; the average visitor spends approximately six minutes on the website.

BC Parks Facebook Site

BC Parks has a prominent social media presence with its Facebook page. Through Facebook, BC Parks can share stories, news about protected areas, community connections and other important information.

As well, BC Parks can cross promote special events, opportunities and contests with our partners and other community connections, engaging the public at large in conversations about parks and protected areas.

How it's measured:

Each unique visit represents one person with a unique address coming to the website. The number of "hits" is often quoted as a web statistic but this is inflated by the number of pages that the visitor clicks (so one visit can involve 10 or more hits).

Since its inception in *2011, public interaction with the BC Parks* Facebook page has been overwhelmingly positive, with visitors, staff and other community members posting comments, photos, stories and engaging with each other and BC Parks. As of March 2015, over 6,700 people 'like' the page.

Posting on Facebook is an easy and expedient way to get the word out about upcoming events, interesting park facts, and other interesting parks facts; for example, a November 2014 posting about a whale rubbing beach in one of our Ecological Reserves, Robson Bight, had a reach of almost 9,000 people (reach refers to the number of people who the post was "served to," i.e.: saw the post), over 1800 people clicking the link, and over 183 likes within a few months

Economic and Financial Benefits

Revenues and Operating Expenditures

The parks and protected areas system is the single largest recreation operation in the province; it provides an extensive variety of recreation, commercial and research opportunities.

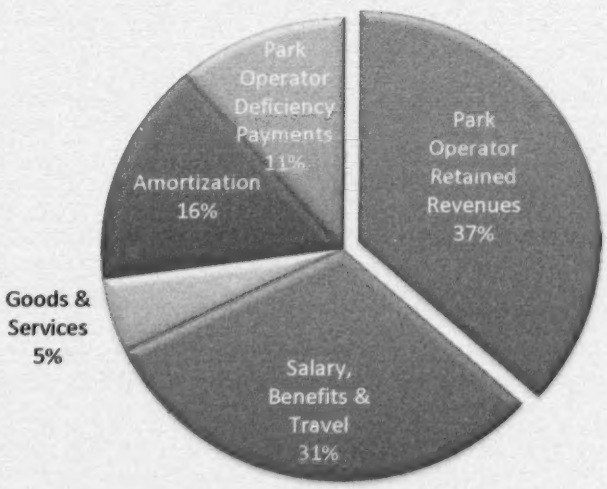
In 2014/15, camping, day use and boating fees (recreation user fees) generated approximately $18.5 million in revenue. Another $1.4 million was collected from fees for activities requiring park use permits. The majority of these revenues are re-invested in the parks and protected areas system. Most of recreation user fee revenues are retained by Park Operators to help offset operating and contract costs. Park use permit revenues are paid into the government's consolidated revenue fund, plus approximately $206,000 from recreation user fee activities.

BC Parks

Revenues & Operating Expenditures 2014/15

BC Parks' Operating Budget (vote): ***$30.1M***

Total Operating Expenditures (vote plus retained revenue): ***$50.1M***


Park Operator Deficiency Payments 11%
Park Operator Retained Revenues 37%
Amortization 16%
Goods & Services 5%
Salary, Benefits & Travel 31%

BC Parks Revenues (*in millions*)

Type of Fee	*Total*		*Retained by Park Operators*		*Paid to Crown*	
	2013/14	*2014/15*	*2013/14*	*2014/15*	*2013/14*	*2014/15*
Recreation User Fees	$17.1	$18.5	$17.0	$18.3	$0.1	$0.2
Permit Fees	$1.6	$1.4	$0	$0	$1.6	$1.4
Totals	***$17.7***	***$20.1***	***$16.0***	***$18.3***	***$1.7***	***$1.6***

Notes:

All fees paid for the right to use protected areas (park use permit fees) are paid into government's consolidated revenue fund.

Some recreation user fees are also paid into government's consolidated revenue fund. These include: excess camping fees from profitable operations and miscellaneous revenues such as Maquinna Hotspring user fees and some backcountry fees.

Park Operator Deficiency Payments are public funds provided to Park Operators to cover the portion of operating costs that exceed revenues generated from recreation user fees.

Park Use Permits

Park use permits are used to manage various types of commercial, land use and research activities that take place in British Columbia's protected areas system, and ensure that these activities conform to park and protected area values.

In 2014/15, BC Parks managed 1,410 permits, a 2.3% increase from the previous year. These permits cover a wide variety of purposes including commercial recreation, filming, communication sites and research activities. Total Park Use Permit revenues were $1.4 million, an 11 percent decrease over 2013/14 revenues. The fall in revenues is explained by a 37.5 percent drop in ski hill revenues due to poor snow conditions and a shortened season in 2014/15.

Active Park Use Permits

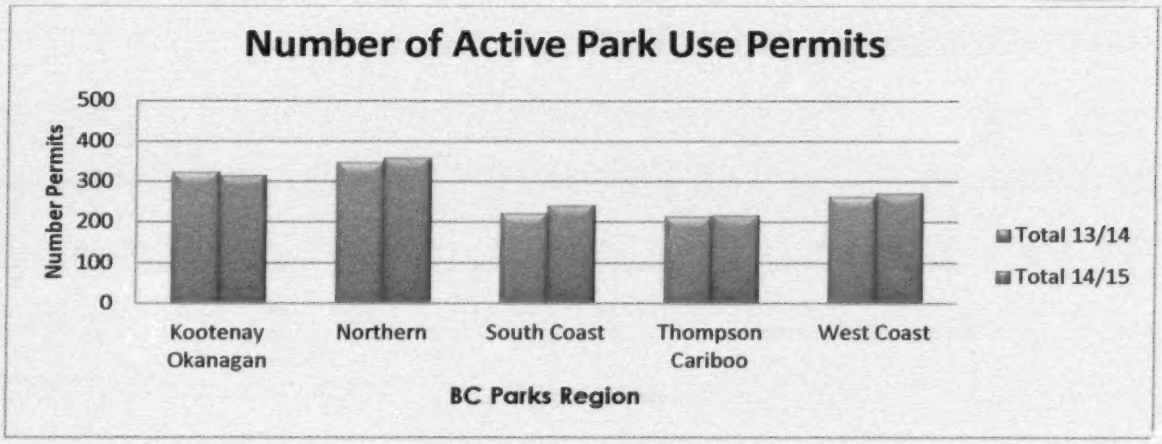
Permit Type	*2013/14*	*2014/15*
Commercial Services	520	536
Land Use Occupancy	519	531
Ecological Reserve	29	30
Trapline	108	103
Film	47	48
Research	135	141
Other	20	21
Total	**1,378**	**1,410**

Notes:

Numbers do not include Park Operators.

Commercial Services includes recreational, big game, angle guiding and associated structures, transportation, special events and accommodation.

Land Use/Occupancy includes structures, utilities, roads, etc.



Economic Benefits

British Columbia's parks and protected areas generate significant economic benefits for the province by supporting tourism, providing jobs, improving and maintaining population health, and generating tax revenue for government. They also provide affordable vacation options for families.

BC Parks' programs have a substantial and ongoing impact on the provincial economy. Investment in the parks and protected areas system creates jobs, generates income for local businesses and produces tax revenue for the government. Each dollar invested in the protected areas system by BC Parks and POs generates about $8.42 in visitor spending on food, entertainment, transportation and other goods and services, according to the 2011 publication released by the Canadian Parks Council: *The Economic Impact of Canada's National, Provincial and Territorial Parks in 2009* .

In May 2015, the Canadian Camping and RV Council, alongside the Camping RV BC Coalition released a report titled *Economic Impact and Trend Analysis of the Canadian Camping Industry*, which quantifies the impact of camping and RVing in British Columbia and Canada. The report finds that campgrounds stimulate economic activity and create jobs for Canadians in urban and rural areas across the country. Over 5.7 million Canadian adults camp each year and the camping industry contributes a total of $4.7 billion annually to Canada's economy, as well as creating the equivalent of 60,000 full-time jobs.

Local, inter-provincial, and international visitors are drawn to the many spectacular places that are managed and protected by BC Parks. Approximately 24% of BC Parks visitors are non-residents, making BC Parks comparable to a provincial exporting industry. Park visitors bring significant economic benefit and development to the surrounding communities.

BC Parks also protect many ecological services that have economic value. For example, the conservation of ecosystem biodiversity results in air and water purification and regulation of floods and climate. BC Parks also provides opportunities for accessible outdoors activities. Nature related recreation is recognized as an important factor in maintaining population health.

As one of the largest providers of overnight accommodation in the province, BC's provincial parks system provides families with affordable vacationing options, and the revenues from vacationing in BC Parks are kept within the province and reinvested in our park system.

For more information on BC Parks and the protected areas system including information in this report, visit the ***BC Parks website*****.**